

## THE DIAMOND NECKLACE.

BY MRS. ANN S. STEPHENS.

For some time the Queen of France indulged freely in her tears, then suddenly recollecting that her absence from the palace might be observed, she sprang up, hastily arranged the cluster of Bourbon lines in her hair, drew the broken feather away, and left the pavilion. Pausing by one of the fountains, she caught some faint falling drops in her little palm, and after bathing her eyes, returned to the palace, smiling, self possessed and graceful as she had left it. Among all who filled those gorgeous apartments, not one appeared so gay as their queen. They little thought that a new and troubling fear lay on her heart!—in a coiled serpent yet it was even so!

It was eleven in the morning, and yet the aristocratic and regal inmates of Versailles were buried in sleep. The palace gardens lay bathed in a flood of light, broken under the trees and about the thickets, into irregular patches of shade shadowing white here and there amid the green branches, brightened with its extinguished companions, a lamp still flickering on, or a withered garland trailing across the terrace, told of the last night's festival. All was low and dissolved, except the little pavilion we have already mentioned. There, seated on the cushion, still leaped as the queen had left them, was De Gouyon; and by his side, with his slender hand in his, sat a dark-eyed, melancholy girl, with a soft, meadow cast of features, and an expression upon them, as she bent her classical head toward him, which could not be mistaken.—The young girl had poured her heart's love out recklessly to the man by her side. He was talking in a low, persuasive tone, which had a kind of enthralling魔力, in its whisperings; still he did not look in her face; but his eyes glowed resolutely about the room, or were fastened on the marble pillar, still soiled with fragments of blackened paper. Casting off a portion of his gloom, Louis smiled his seat, and lifting the younger of the beautiful children to his knee, circled the other with his arm. The queen drew an ottoman to his feet, and passing an arm around the young boy, pressed his round cheek to hers with the affectionate grace that was becoming in her.

"Now," she said, summing the little fellow's hair with her hand, and raising her bright face to the king's now, if we were a peasant boy, living in a snug little cot at the foot of the hill draped by the vineyards which supported us, with a few goats and a garden, how happy we could be?"

"Would to Heaven we were in so safe a shelter," said the queen, "then I might gather my family about my humble hearthstone, without a fear of finding deceit and treachery in its bosom,—The young girl had poured her heart's love out recklessly to the man by her side. He was talking in a low, persuasive tone, which had a kind of enthralling魔力, in its whisperings; still he did not look in her face; but his eyes glowed resolutely about the room, or were fastened on the marble pillar, still soiled with fragments of blackened paper. Casting off a portion of his gloom, Louis smiled his seat, and lifting the younger of the beautiful children to his knee, circled the other with his arm. The queen drew an ottoman to his feet, and passing an arm around the young boy, pressed his round cheek to hers with the affectionate grace that was becoming in her.

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